



CONGRESSMAN'S REPORT

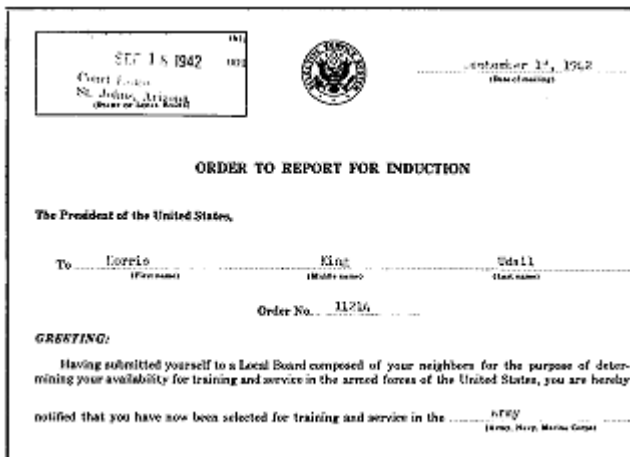
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The President of the United States, *Greeting:*

In my personal scrapbook I have a tattered letter dated September 18, 1942. It begins with that famous preamble: "The President of the United States, To Morris King Udall. Greeting: Having submitted yourself to a Local Board composed of your neighbors for the purpose of determining your availability for training and service in the armed forces..."

Eighteen days later I was Private Udall, No. 39850679. Thus began for me a four-year hitch in Uncle Sam's Army and Air Corps. It was hectic, disruptive, rewarding. I survived it, with no lasting brain damage and few regrets.



*TATTERED LETTER WITH A FAMOUS
PREAMBLE*

Since America was shoved into a world power role 50 years ago, Selective Service has been, in times of need, a harsh but necessary instrument. It has prompted serious, recurring and often bitter argument. When Congressional old-timers recall dramatic debate, they always mention August 12, 1941, when a 203-202 House vote saved Selective Service from immediate expiration and may have changed the course of World War II.

Since then a generation has gone full circle. My oldest son will be required to register just next year, while *this* year his father takes part in a debate to determine the kind of draft law that will govern him and millions of other fathers' sons.

AREAS OF DISPUTE

Unless Congress acts by June 30, the government's authority to draft anyone will expire. In some form or another it will be extended -- almost everyone agrees on this. But the 535 Representatives and Senators have almost that many ideas of what changes should be made.

In 1967 two million young men come of draft age. If we needed *all* of them (as in World War II) there would be few problems. But even with Vietnam we need only *one* million, or fewer. So the tough questions are: *Who* is taken when *not all* are taken? Who goes, and who does not? And when?

As the debate rolls through the halls of Congress and around the country the chief criticisms of present law (and proposals for change) really boil down to about six or seven. I'd like to take a "nutshell" look at these arguments, summarize the rebuttals one hears, and share with you my present, tentative thinking on each of them. Then I'd like to get the benefit of your thinking on these same questions. More about that later. Here are the main criticisms I hear to the present draft law:

EQUALITY FOR ALL -- BUT ARE SOME 'MORE EQUAL'?

There are serious inequities and different standards among the nation's 4,084 local draft boards. Because each board presides over its own separate manpower pool (and has its own ideas about the "national interest"), the chances of being drafted vary sharply from pool to pool. One board may have so many volunteers it does not have to resort to drafting at all. Another board may be stingy with student deferments because it doesn't have enough volunteers or non-students to meet its quotas. Or, the neighbor boy of a third board's chairman may get a deferment while the lad across town, in identical circumstances, gets "greetings." Furthermore, under present law a young man keeps his original draft board even if he moves away; some draft boards, it is charged, take advantage of "absentees" and draft them instead of more eligible local registrants.

SUGGESTION: There should be *one national pool* of availables with uniform standards to determine who goes. We Americans can endure high taxes or almost anything if we know that all others similarly situated are getting *identical* treatment.

REBUTTAL: It's also a fact of life that no two persons -- or their situations -- are exactly alike. A draft board deals *not* with identical blocks of wood, but with individual young men. A cold, impersonal set of standards cannot reveal the full story. Only someone close to a specific situation -- in this case, a *local* board -- can make the truly human, individual judgments which ought to be made.

MY PRESENT THINKING: I have great respect for the dedicated and generally excellent work of local boards, but the arguments for a national pool of eligibles are more persuasive to me. The local boards would continue the important tasks of making classifications, etc.

THE STUDENT DEFERMENT SYSTEM

The student deferment system is all wrong; it discriminates against the poor and the less gifted. Not every young person has an I.Q. of 110 or prosperous parents who can pay the \$1,500 to \$2,000 minimum cost of a college year. Should a young man be drafted merely because he does not have these things? Many young persons become "career" students by getting deferments

through four years of college and then graduate school. By the time they complete all this, perhaps they are 26 and/or married and/or fathers -- and thus, practically speaking, unlikely ever to be drafted.

Granted, Gen. Lewis B. Hershey, head of the draft system, has tried to remove collegiate "bomb shelters" by establishing minimum academic grade guidelines as a standard for granting deferments. But a "B" at Harvard may not equal a "B" at Siwash, and one professor at a state university (not Arizona!) flunked his whole class in protest. When President Johnson a couple of years ago barred deferments to future newlyweds, a cynical reporter wrote: "Young men are falling all over themselves these days in a big rush to get married. It's love, of course, but in a lot of cases they spell it V-I-E-T-N-A-M."

SUGGESTION: Abolish student deferments for graduates, except medical and dental students. Or, abolish *all* student deferments.

REBUTTAL: The fact is that individual college students *can* delay their service. But eventually they *do* serve, and in greater proportion than the rest of the draft-age population, and they make better soldiers for having had more education. (Note: Selective Service figures show that 52 per cent of *all* young men serve at some point, compared to 60 per cent of young men who have had *some* college, but also compared to just 40 per cent of those who have *finished* college.) The answer is to keep granting educational deferments but make sure that a student -- once deferred -- will eventually serve, no matter whether he marries, has children, or reaches 26. Our country is strong precisely because we have more engineers, scientists, lawyers, economists and teachers. It would be dangerous to cut off the supply.

MY PRESENT THINKING: Except for a few critical categories, like medical and dental students, I would end *graduate* deferments. If we take the 18 and 19 year-olds first, as I favor, the undergraduate deferments would be less of a problem. And, except for a few critical occupations, I would eliminate them too.

THE FIRST SHALL BE LAST -- OR FIRST?

The idea of taking older men first is unwise. We ought to do the reverse. Under the present system, the young man who is 26 is more susceptible to the draft than the young man who is 18. This regulation goes back to the draft law of 1940. The reasoning: teenagers are not mature and should be kept away as long as possible from the temptations which accompany military service. However, today's view of the teen-ager is quite different from that of 1940. We see him as more equipped in awareness and ability to cope with the outside world. Military leaders say a young person makes a better soldier. His responses are quicker; he adjusts more easily. The 18-year-old is in a state of transition. He has not settled on a career. He still has his options. If he serves and returns, the G.I. Bill will help pay for an education he might not otherwise afford.

On the other hand, the 26-year-old is more settled, in terms of occupation, family and address. He probably has finished college and is in the crucial first couple of years on his job. He may be

thinking about buying a home. For him the draft can be severely disruptive -much more than it would have been eight years earlier.

SUGGESTION: Draft the 18 and 19 year-olds first, working upward in age, instead of downward.

REBUTTAL: The argument that teen-agers are more vulnerable to temptation is not without truth. They are more adjustable because their habits have not yet been formed. If we draft teen-agers, we adopt a national policy requiring kids to fight our wars at an age when they're denied the right to vote.

MY PRESENT THINKING: On balance, I have to buy the arguments for starting at age 18, right after high school, and working up.

THE LOTTERY ISSUE

The present system of 4,084 local draft pools is inequitable; what we need is one national pool eliminating local favoritism, etc., and treating all alike. Why not return to the system used in the earliest days of the draft, assigning each young man a number and fixing the order of call-up by drawing names out of a fishbowl?

SUGGESTION: President Johnson has proposed an updated national lottery to be known as FAIR (which stands for Fair and Impartial Random) to eliminate present discrimination among boards.

REBUTTAL: Whether FAIR would be fair is open to question. Opponents say a young man would live in constant uncertainty because he would not know when his "number was up." Besides, decisions of this importance should not be made by chance. To paraphrase Gertrude Stein, a lottery is a lottery is a lottery -- whether it's FAIR or not.

MY PRESENT THINKING: Under present conditions I have to go with the lottery. Numbers can be pulled many months in advance of call-up. Draftees would know well ahead when they might be called.

UNIVERSAL MILITARY TRAINING -- OR A CAREER ARMY?

The draft should either be made universal or abolished. As matters stand, some young men are paying a high, even the highest, price to serve their country while others make no contribution at all.

SUGGESTION: Proposals now before Congress run the gamut -- from drafting no one to drafting everyone. At one end is the proposal to abolish the draft. Advocates of this approach urge that we increase pay and fringe benefits, making military service so

attractive that career volunteers will come forward to form a citizen's army in the huge numbers needed. After all, they say, the Navy and Air Force are almost entirely volunteer right now. At the other extreme it is argued, "Let's draft everyone." Proponents of this view would have us institute a system of Universal Military Training, with every young man obliged to give two years of service to his country. Similar proposals were argued and considered seriously in the 1940s, but they faded away with repeated extensions of Selective Service.

REBUTTAL: Neither UMT nor a career army is the answer. In fact, both are dangerous. UMT would pour into the armed forces hundreds of thousands of young men and surfeit the military with manpower it doesn't need. For what purpose? As for the career army proposal, America has traditionally relied on small career cadres in peacetime, swelling the ranks during times of crisis with ordinary citizens who return to their homes when the job is done. In contrast, Germany and other nations with long records of armed aggression have traditionally relied on professional soldiers, or "mercenaries." An honorable and peace-loving democracy is best served by young men who serve when they would rather not, who answer their country's cry but "just for the duration." These are the young men who make the best soldiers. The person who wants to be a career soldier might be just the person who should *not* be a soldier. The United States of America ought to discharge its responsibilities in the world with proven and traditional machinery.

MY PRESENT THINKING: I have been somewhat impressed with the arguments for UMT, but it raises broad, fundamental questions of national policy. It simply isn't going any place in the present crisis atmosphere. And, until Vietnam's big demands for manpower are ended, I just don't think we could establish an all-career army. For all practical purposes we *now* have an all-volunteer Navy and Air Force. For the long-term future I would be inclined to favor ending the draft and raising military pay sufficiently to put the Army on a largely career basis.

SERVICE OTHER THAN MILITARY?

The Peace Corps, Teacher Corps, VISTA or other humanitarian agencies should provide a young man with a substitute for military service, another way to serve his country. Our nation's efforts for peace, justice and stability in this world are not limited to Vietnam. A young Peace Corpsman serves two years in a remote, rugged Philippine village, risking violence and disease to help bring progress to a backward part of the world as part of an important U.S. program. Under present law he returns home and may be promptly drafted for two years in Vietnam. Is this fair? Why can't a young man fulfill his national obligation by giving two years of his life to the wars against ignorance and suffering? Isn't there a place for humanitarian service?

SUGGESTION: Selective Service should permit Peace Corpsmen, sincere conscientious objectors and others like them to discharge their military obligations in ways other than military service. This new policy would be only right for a nation dedicated to the fundamental dignity and diversity of man.

REBUTTAL: There is no real equivalent to the sacrifice and service involved in military combat in times of war. If even a few young men use this kind of loophole to avoid the draft, we sap the confidence of our people in the equality of sacrifice.

MY PRESENT THINKING: I tend to believe that the suggestion above has merit. The standards for the Peace Corps and VISTA are so high that only three or four of every 100 applicants can qualify. Thus this change would not create much of a "draft shelter." It would give the exceptionally idealistic and religious young person an honorable option for national service.

SHOULD WE LOWER DRAFT STANDARDS?

Physical and mental standards are too high. For a long time Heavyweight Champion Cassius Clay was rejected because of his "mental ability." This seems slightly ridiculous. There are few men -- even in politics -- who are as quick-minded and glib-tongued as Mr. Ali. Or take the case of Quarterback Joe Namath. Every fall Sunday he survives the rigors of pro football's "blitz," but he flunked his military physical. Clearly, standards that exclude such men should be lowered.

SUGGESTION: Secretary McNamara is among those who feel much good could be achieved by reducing physical and psychological requirements of the draft. Not only would men like Clay and Namath be able to serve, but others with remediable deficiencies would benefit from the educational and medical facilities of our military establishment. This truly would convert institutions of destruction into means of saving and upgrading young men with educational and physical shortcomings.

REBUTTAL: This proposal raises fundamental questions. It is not the function of the military to educate or to treat. The defense establishment already consumes more than half of every Federal dollar, with little congressional oversight. Are we now to add on more functions, which rightfully belong elsewhere than to the Pentagon?

MY PRESENT THINKING: I'm for a middle-ground compromise. Present standards are a bit too high. We should lower them a modest degree and use military facilities to reclaim *some* of the marginal young men. I would oppose standards so low as to burden the Defense Department with a high influx of substandard trainees.


LET'S HAVE A REFERENDUM

This discussion has been necessarily brief. Many more arguments, pro and con, can be made. There are other related issues. But you have here a brief look at the areas in dispute. And you have some idea of my present line of thought. Now, how about you? What do you and your draft-age sons think?

In my first newsletter this year I appealed for your letters, your advice and criticism. I won't have to vote on these issues for several weeks, and there is time for a referendum among the people I try to represent.

In most past years I have mailed a Legislative Questionnaire to every home in the Second District, and usually I have covered many separate issues. Because this is the big issue in the spring of 1967 I have decided to limit my questionnaire to Selective Service and its related problems. A ballot is enclosed. Note there are two columns, permitting two members of the family to "vote." If there happens to be a draft-age male in your family, I would urge that you let him cast one of those "votes." I am hoping for a big response.

Here is your chance to have an impact on an important public issue. I'll appreciate your help.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Marvin L. Bidace". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal stroke extending to the right.

MAILING LIST NOTE:

If you would like to be added to my mailing list, to receive my regular newsletters, just indicate your name and address, and check the mailing list box, on your ballot. Do not do so, however, if you have received my newsletters published earlier this year.